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3 March 1952

U.S. Capabilities in Southeast Europe

I. The Problem

- a. To examine U.S. capabilities in southeast Europe which affect U.S. cold war strategy in that area.
- b. To determine, concisely and objectively, the principal factors at work in southeast Europe so far as they contribute to the formulation of an integrated U.S. global cold war strategy.
- c. To determine priority courses of action with respect to the area as part of a general approach to the development of a national strategy.

II. Basic Assumption

The Kremlin, without recourse to general war for the next five years, will seek by all available means to consolidate and improve its position in the Balkan Peninsula and, through vigorous development of the cold war, to extend its control over the entire area.

III. Conclusions

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[a. An examination of prevailing conditions in the area which favor the consolidation and strengthening of Soviet power reveals that the relative position of the USSR has improved more rapidly and effectively than was formerly thought possible.]

b. On the other hand, all of the factors favoring the Soviet position in the area have their counterpart in weakness, a fact which is impeding the achievement of Soviet aims. These weaknesses are susceptible of more effective exploitation through intensive application of Western capabilities for cold war activity.

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c. Sufficient assets are in being and currently in process of development to permit the intensification of cold war activity during 1952 and 1953.

d. U.S. capabilities for conducting intensified cold war activity would be greatly enhanced by the improved coordination and integration of such activity with a view to obtaining maximum effect.

IV. Discussion

1. (Isolate and define the major issues of conflict between the Soviet Bloc and "The West" in southeastern Europe.)

The USSR, despite its claims that it would not interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbors and was interested only in having "friendly" governments along its borders, has subjugated and modified beyond recognition the countries under its control. The integration of the Balkan satellites into the Soviet Orbit has been accomplished with calculated disregard of all national and human rights, by a process of accelerated denationalization and the brutal transformation of their political, social and economic orders. Western efforts to check the imposition of Soviet control through diplomatic action have proved futile. This in turn has raised the question of what courses of action should be undertaken by the West, short of war, to prevent the complete absorption of these countries and counter Soviet capabilities for aggressive action based on its satellites. The latters' rising potential for aggression against adjacent non-Communist areas of strategic importance to the West increases substantially Western interest in the area. The Western position in the Eastern Mediterranean is such, however, as to be able in turn to apply increasing pressure against the Balkan outpost of Soviet power. As a result of this conflict, the following developments have occurred which affect both Western and Soviet policies:

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a. Non-concurrence

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- a. Non-concurrence of the West in the legality of the Soviet position in the Satellites, or the legitimacy of their Communist regimes.
 - b. Soviet efforts at total elimination of Western influence in the area.
 - c. Direct Communist aggression in Greece, which retained its independence only through U.S. military and economic support.
 - d. Western economic and military aid to dissident Yugoslavia, with an implicit encouragement of national Communism as a counter to Soviet-dominated Communism.
 - e. East-West propaganda offensives.
 - f. Infiltration of agents and increasing subversive efforts by both East and West.
 - g. Economic warfare, manifested in the Western denial of critical goods to the eastern satellites and in the Soviet economic blockade of Yugoslavia.
 - h. The Soviet military buildup in the satellites and the corresponding U.S. military buildup of Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia, with the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in NATO.
2. (List, in order of their importance, the prevailing conditions which tend to improve the Soviet's position with respect to these issues.)

With respect to the above issues, the Soviet position in southeast Europe has steadily improved, but with two outstanding exceptions, namely Greece and Yugoslavia. In both these countries, however, there exist exploitable elements of weakness. The following factors are significant in evaluating this overall improvement of the Soviet position in the Balkans:

- a. Within the Orbit (Albania, Bulgaria, and Rumania)

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(1) Political - All organized political opposition has been driven

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underground and is considered virtually impotent under existing conditions. There is, moreover, no unified national political organization in exile which can now satisfactorily compensate for and fill this void. Political control within the satellites is entirely equated with the security control exercised through the repressive organs of the Ministries of the Interior.

(2) Social - The populations have been reduced wholly to dependence upon conformity and obedience in order to survive. The liquidation or neutralization of social elements capable of resisting the regimes has already been effected to a large degree. The denationalization of each satellite, and its reorientation toward Soviet patterns has been accompanied by a progressive elimination or containment of Western influences. The entire social process is directed toward the creation of "new people" whose advancement is due solely to the existence of so-called Popular Democracies which owe their existence to the Soviet Union.

(3) Economic - The Communist regimes of the satellites are in a position to enforce compliance with their programs and procedure. Complete control of the distribution system has ensured the economic bondage of all categories of workers. Ruthless exploitation of the labor force enables the Communist regimes to maintain relatively high productivity and in fact to increase it in the case of specific key items. The extent and efficiency of security controls also permits almost total indifference to the consumer needs of the population and allows the siphoning off of large surpluses of agricultural, industrial and raw material production to bolster the overall economic potential

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of the USSR. The economic activity of the satellites must be considered to be on a war-footing, and increasingly integrated with that of the USSR.

(4) Psychological - The helplessness of the satellite peoples to resist the daily pressures of the Communist regimes steadily increases their pliability and reduces their capabilities for moral as well as active resistance. To them it appears that no alternative to submission to Communism is in sight, as hope in an early war of liberation between West and East is being steadily dissipated. Through daily manipulation of all outlets of propaganda and indoctrination, the Kremlin is able to befog basic issues, exploit national or religious sentiment when desired, and create an illusion of dependence on the USSR for protection against "predatory" and imperialistic Western countries. Lack of contact with the West, moreover, promotes popular acceptance of a belief in Soviet preponderance over the Western Powers. In addition to the negative pressures of fear and coercion, the Communists fully exploit feelings of social solidarity based on mass displays of strength. Opportunistic desires for self-advancement in an apparently irresistible movement are encouraged. Special incentives, training and treatment for the young ensure constantly growing reserves of "new" people who have no ties with the past or the outside world, and owe their position entirely to their loyalty and service to the regime.

b. Greece

(1) Political - The Greek Communists have succeeded to some extent in reorganizing their underground apparatus after their defeat

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in 1949. Despite the strong anti-Communist sentiments of the Greek people, there exists considerable opportunity for political maneuvering among large segments of the population, which is frequently unable to distinguish between legitimate progressives and crypto-Communists. The task of the Greek Communists is facilitated by endemic weaknesses in the central government.

(2) Social - Fundamental social inequalities coupled with evidence of corruption and political ineptitude on the part of many of the political leaders tend to nurture the resentments of the laboring classes and increase their susceptibility to Communist manipulation and penetration.

(3) Economic - In spite of considerable progress in the reconstruction of Greece after the devastation of the war and postwar period, the living standards of the Greek people are precariously low. The deficit economy of the country, still requiring significant outside aid, is aggravated by the government's failures to follow through with positive economic programs. Increased defense requirements are met by reductions in economic aid, and unless available funds are efficiently handled, some increase in popular disaffection over lowered living standards is likely to facilitate greater political inroads by the Greek Communists.

(4) Psychological - Greek morale has suffered as a consequence of continued difficult living conditions and lack of any firm confidence in the Athens Government. Recurring crises and a general spirit of war-fatigue increase the apathy of large sectors of the population. The disaffection of both peasants and workers, although latent in its manifestations, is extensive and provides a fertile

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terrain for recruitment and exploitation by the underground Communist organization.

c. Yugoslavia

(1) Political - Despite a highly efficient Yugoslav security system, the Soviets have been able to organize and carry on clandestine activity within the country. Both the Yugoslav Communist Party and anti-Communist opponents of the regime are susceptible to such activity. Much confusion undoubtedly exists within the political hierarchy of the regime with respect to Tito's progressive orientation toward the West. The Kremlin probably has potentially important assets among the numerous elements of the party who owe their position solely to their party affiliation. This position is under increasing threat as Western influences penetrate the country and give scope to expression from the anti-Communist population of Yugoslavia. Any effort by the regime to win greater popular support at the expense of party prerogatives thus raises the question of alienating influential segments in the hierarchy. In addition, convinced Communists in the regime are vulnerable to ideological arguments that Tito has split the international Communist movement and abandoned its principles.

(2) Social - The Yugoslav mosaic contains other serious elements of exploitable weakness. The latent but bitter feud between Croats and Serbs, the centrifugal tendencies of all national minorities deriving from profound religious, political and cultural differences, and the traditional antagonism between rural and urban interests must be considered potential assets of the Kremlin, even though diametrically opposed to Communism per se.

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resulting from the continued overemphasis on capital investment to the detriment of overall economic equilibrium creates a situation of considerable internal weakness.

(4) Psychological - Both the inner-party divisions suggested above and the split between the regime and the overwhelming majority of the people create an atmosphere of latent internal conflict which directly affects the unity of the nation and its capacity to resist in a period of crises.

3. (Conversely, list those conditions prevailing in your area which significantly impede or menace the Soviet program).

All of the above factors of Soviet strength have their counterpart in weakness. Moreover, although the two anti-Soviet countries in the Balkans also have numerous elements of weakness exploitable by the Kremlin, both are bulwarks of the Western position in the area and are capable of being strengthened steadily through wise application of Western power. A review of conditions impeding or blocking the achievement of Soviet aims in the area reveals the following:

a. Within the Orbit

(1) Political - The Communist facade of total control has been hastily constructed out of elements which leave much to be desired from the standpoint of reliability or endurance under serious stress. The satellite Communist parties, despite their surface subservience to Moscow, are a composite of elements ranging from a relatively few hardcore doctrinaires to the large mass of opportunists whose final and complete commitment to the regime is improbable. Except for Bulgaria, which has a sizable prewar Communist

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party, neither Rumania nor Albania could count more than a few hundred convinced Communists at most, until the Communist seizure of power led to a vast mushrooming in party strength. The Communist political machine, however, has tended more and more to divorce itself from the people, whose antagonism is kept alive through the relentless imposition of Communist programs and procedures. In carrying out their programs, the regimes have had to contend with this popular reaction and as a result frequently have been forced into temporary retreats on ideological and economic sectors considered vital in Communist doctrine. Failure to perform according to schedule has had serious repercussions on the party structure, leading periodically to the purging of the top echelon. The cohesion of the Communist parties in the satellites is apparently becoming to an ever greater degree a matter of immediate self-interest, cemented by fear of deviation or failure and therefore essentially lacking in idealism or political conviction.

(2) Social - The national differences between the Balkan peoples and the USSR are varied and deepseated. The process of remoulding these populations into the rigid patterns of Soviet culture is unprecedented, and although the Communist approach is to maintain a fiction of national and cultural autonomy, the Balkan peoples have few illusions that they are anything except satrapies of the Soviet Union. Such tenacious Balkan traditions as the family group or the Albanian clan system are likely to remain bulwarks of national resistance despite all efforts to undermine and abolish them.

(3) Economic - The basic economic strength of both Rumania and Bulgaria

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is probably lower now than in prewar days, even though some types of production have increased. As a self-contained entity, more or less cut off from exchanges with the Western industrial plant, the orbit is forced to develop its economic potential through overconcentration on a few vital sectors and the use of inferior equipment on others. The effects of violent integration of the southeastern Europe satellites into an orbit-wide complex, which disrupted the normal economic activity of the area and transformed the satellite countries into colonies of the USSR, are, however, being overcome to an increasing degree.

(4) Psychological - The virulence of latent nationalistic antagonism in the Balkan countries imposes a need on the part of the Soviets for maintaining a constant defense against potential national deviationism, not only in the case of the hostile populations but that of the parties as well. This problem cannot be overcome in the near future. Although Communist brutality has to a large extent cowed and depressed the satellite peoples, the methods whereby this apparently favorable result was accomplished has in fact rendered the regimes even more odious in the eyes of the majority. Despite Soviet efforts to exploit the fear of Western aggression in the minds of the captive peoples, these efforts are to a noteworthy degree nullified by popular hopes of a liberating war. So long, moreover, as the Western message reaches the satellite peoples, there will exist an alternative to Sovietism to which neither the people nor their leaders can remain totally indifferent. Even the Communist effort to besmirch the West through daily propaganda is still, in its own way, a reminder that

the Western alternative exists. The feeling of hope is also

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tenacious; in spite
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tenacious; in spite of their apparent resignation and discouragement, the Balkan peoples react strongly to manifestations of Western strength and determination, as exemplified by the Korean war.

b. Greece

(1) Political - The U.S. position in Greece is probably the most important single factor of political stability in the country and one which the Communists are by and large unable to undermine. Recognition of this role by all shades of political opinion except the extreme left has overshadowed the vacillations of innumerable coalition governments and has led to a willing acceptance on the part of the political leaders of U.S. guidance and aid. This feeling is reciprocated by the people, who support the government in its effort to strengthen the national defense against Communism and, despite the existence of great economic and social inequalities, turn instinctively away from the left in their search for internal stability. Moreover, in seeking to bolster Greece's exposed position against Communist aggression, the Greek leaders have subordinated old animosities with respect to Italy, Turkey and Yugoslavia to more basic problems of national self-interest. This is also true of other issues tending to plague Greece's relations with the anti-Stalinist world, particularly in connection with the British position in Cyprus and Greek ambitions to incorporate the Northern Epirus.

(2) Economic - The U.S. economic aid program to reconstruct and develop Greece, while it has not solved the country's endemic economic problems, has succeeded in providing a hopeful alternative to Communization. Although the amount of aid allocated to economic

development has been reduced, it is generally recognized that much

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has been accomplished in restoring communications and basic industries, combatting unemployment, developing housing programs, and maintaining the economic equilibrium of Greece.

(3) Social - The social organization of Greece, with its highly centralized government in Athens and well integrated police and local governing units, affords considerable protection against the development of Communist activity in the country, permitting intensive repression of the movement whenever this becomes imperative. The Greek nation is a generally homogenous race with distinct national characteristics of its own, differentiating it in many ways from its neighbors.

(4) Psychological - A major obstacle to Soviet plans in Greece lies in the intense nationalism of the Greek people, their pride in their military exploits, and in their sentiment that they represent a vital outpost of the West. Greece's traditional ties with England, France and more recently with the U.S. are such that Soviet-Communist propaganda is of little effect in issues of basic importance. In spite of their vulnerable position on the periphery of the Soviet Balkan satellites, the Greeks have maintained a high degree of courage, reaching at times boldness. The fact that Communism is now identified in their eyes with hereditary enemies unifies and strengthens their will to resist. Moreover, their experience with Communist atrocities during the Civil War has built up a profound popular antipathy toward the movement as an instrument of alien aggression.

c. Yugoslavia

(1) Political - The Titoist political machine, in spite of or possibly even because of some gravely objectionable characteristics,

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has as tight a hold over the country as any of the Communist regimes in the orbit. Quite apart from ideological considerations, the top leadership of the Belgrade government has evinced a relatively high degree of competence in a complex situation. It has, moreover, at its disposal a disciplined and apparently well-integrated political apparatus obedient to the central direction of the Party. The Kremlin's failure in 1948 to coerce the Yugoslav Communist Party into repudiation of the Titoist leadership underlined the essentially national character of the partisan movement in Yugoslavia and the fact that the postwar party is, in its majority, a Titoist creation. Under present circumstances, it is unlikely that the regime can be overthrown by purely internal subversion.

(2) Economic - Without significant economic aid from the West, Yugoslavia would not have been able to overcome the effects of the Cominform economic blockade which began in mid-1949. As a result of such aid, however, Yugoslavia is in a position to maintain itself independently of Eastern Europe and can look forward to a greater degree of economic development than would have been possible with Soviet aid along. Further economic warfare measures by the orbit have lost their significance as a weapon against Tito, and as a result of continued Western aid, some amelioration of Yugoslav living standards is likely to occur.

(3) Social - The Communist structure of Yugoslavia, despite serious inherent weaknesses deriving from the hostility of the people, has the cohesion and impenetrability of the police state. The Party unity of doctrine, training and loyalty, even though open to question

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on many counts, operates to hold together the disparate elements in the Yugoslav Federation, which have been traditionally in conflict and separatist by preference. Although some areas of Yugoslavia, notably Serbia and Montenegro, have had in the past strongly developed pan-Slavic sentiments and an attachment for Russia, other important regions of the country have been strongly influenced by Western European civilization, especially Slovenia, Croatia, and Dalmatia. The majority of the Yugoslav people, whatever their regional or cultural differences, are so opposed to the Communist system that any Cominform appeal to the people on this basis is foredoomed to failure.

(4) Psychological - As evidence of U.S. assistance to Yugoslavia multiplies in the country, the people's former feeling of isolation and vulnerability to Soviet attack appears to be diminishing. The population, certainly, has been encouraged by the growing ties between the two countries. Many apparently are convinced that such concessions as have been made by the Tito regime are the result of U.S. pressure, and appear hopeful that the regime will have to attenuate further its policies in the future. It appears too that the U.S. aid program to Yugoslavia, even as it strengthens the pro-U.S. feelings of the people may be exerting a positive influence on the more important leaders of the regime, whose past attitudes toward the West were largely conditioned by Stalinist doctrine. Much of the latter has been discredited in their eyes by Soviet actions against the Tito government, and this appears to be leading in turn to a reevaluation of certain basic premises. As Yugoslavia extends its ties with the West, its breach with the Kremlin acquires finality and the possibility of any reconciliation diminishes accordingly. To the extent that

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these sentiments exist and can be strengthened, the position of the USSR is weaker in the area.

4. On the basis of paragraph three above, the following are considered to be the principal Communist vulnerabilities in southeast Europe:

a. Within the Orbit (Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania)

(1) Political - The opposition of the majority of the population, both to the USSR and to its native puppet regimes, comprises a long-range vulnerability to the Soviet position in the Balkans. Within the local Communist parties there are also serious potential vulnerabilities which result from the sheer opportunism of the mass of party members, the intraparty maneuvering for position, the lack of real security for the individual member, fear of popular revenge as much as of party discipline, dissatisfaction with operating procedures, personal antagonism toward Russian agents, and uncertainty as to Soviet ability to defeat the West. Moreover, whatever ideological content may have existed in Marxism-Leninism for old line Communists has been vitiated to a large extent by the unabashed exploitation of its satellites by the USSR and by the realities of existence under Soviet Communism. The workings of the secret security system and of the public purge have had a dual effect, that of enforcing conformity and subservience, and also that of creating confusion and doubt regarding the member's personal fate. Even hard core, top level personnel can be made aware that they are expendable.

(2) Social - All remnants of the former social order which cannot be fully liquidated in the immediate future are exploitable instruments against the existing system. Communist reorganization of the satellite

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societies likewise gives rise to new social inequalities providing terrain for exploitation.

(3) Economic - The extent to which all segments of a collectivized economy are dependent on centralized planning affords numerous opportunities for harassment and sabotage, both passive and active. Peasant resistance can thoroughly disrupt planting, sowing, harvesting and collection schedules, eliminating agricultural surpluses for orbit consumption or sale abroad, and creating grave political problems for the central authorities responsible for total output. Industrial planning can be disrupted by the prevention of the purchase and replacement of vital equipment in Western markets and by forcing the satellite regimes to meet these requirements out of the orbit industrial potential, which is limited. The close interrelationships in the distribution systems of the satellites likewise afford opportunities for internal disruptive activity. So long as the Balkan satellites are forced to send their surpluses out of the country to support the Soviet economy and the productive sector of the economy are obliged to conform to orbit planning to the detriment of the local populations, there is every likelihood that the economic situation in the satellites will constitute a serious political vulnerability as well.

(4) Psychological -

(a) Within the satellite Communist parties the existing stresses are such that the strain on the overall structure can be greatly increased through deliberate exploitation, such as character assassination, denunciation, bribery, psychological manipulation and

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manipulation and inducements to defect. Moreover, the satellite parties are aware of the hostility of the general population and this awareness can be magnified to fear or popular revenge under different circumstances. The Stalinist doctrine is so compromised by opportunistic and Great Russian deviation that it is vulnerable to intelligent attack, especially among the young. Possibly a majority of the total satellite party membership is vulnerable to nationalism.

(b) Deep-rooted sentiments which are exacerbated by Soviet procedures are: national pride, attachment to national and regional folkways, fear of the Russian colossus, and detestation of any minority being temporarily favored over the majority. Individualism and the habit of personal ownership are also much more highly developed in the satellites than in the USSR, as is their social and cultural awareness.

(c) The experience of Balkan adults with pre-Communist conditions and with Western civilization has been too recent for them to believe Soviet propaganda exalting Russian superiority in the technical, industrial and cultural fields. Even their recognition of the preponderance of the Soviet military strength in the postwar period is modified by a faith in the Western industrial, military, and spiritual potential.

(d) Continued privations on the part of the majority of the population coupled with brutal exploitation of their productive capacities on behalf of the Soviet Union serve as a

constant irritant
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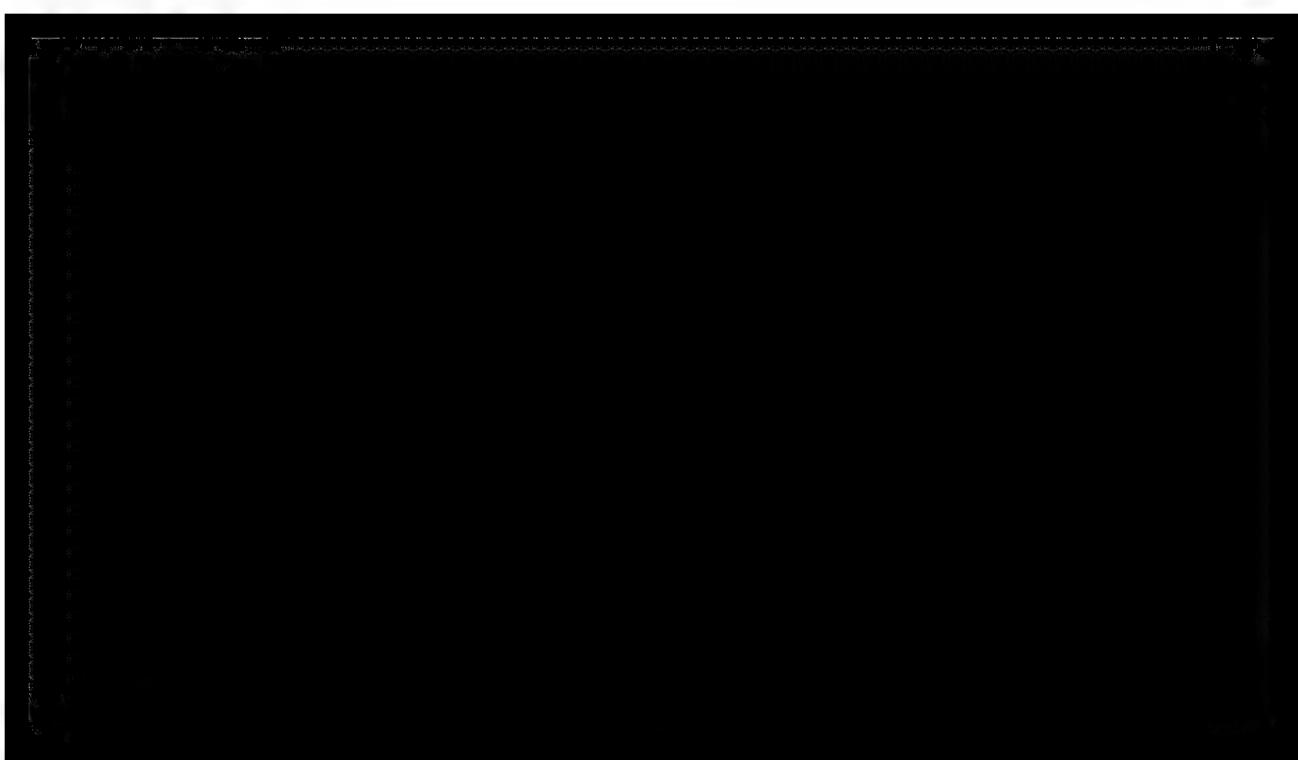
constant irritant of popular antagonism, which endless Communist propaganda merely aggravates.

b. Greece - Communist efforts to penetrate Greece can be countered by the machinery of the Ministry of the Interior, by education on Communist aims and methods of clandestine operation, and particularly by continued improvements in Greek economic and political stability.

c. Yugoslavia - The continued stability of the Yugoslav regime through conscious fostering of improved economic and political development is a primary deterrent to the extension of Soviet Communism to Yugoslavia. The country's own experience with Stalinism and Great Russian nationalism also affords an effective defense against Soviet propaganda and subversive attempts, both among the people and the Party hierarchy.

5. (Indicate whether or not there exist overriding adverse factors which

must be solved.)



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could be radically improved by a joint statement of non-aggressive intent by the powers concerned, guaranteeing Albania's independence and the integrity of its present territorial borders. So long as the Hoxha regime is able to present invasion and dismemberment as the inevitable concomitant of liberation, the regime will be able to count on an otherwise unjustified degree of support from the people.

✓ c. The lack of clearly-defined U.S. end objectives with respect to the Balkans, and with special reference to the Soviet Satellite components thereof, or of a clear statement as to the methods which should be employed to achieve these objectives. This lack impedes the development of phased operations designed to implement any overall strategic plan.

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7. (What existing potentialities within your area need vigorous reinforcement for maximum exploitation?)

The existing potentialities in the area for large-scale passive resistance are such as to warrant vigorous reinforcement.

a. The basic antagonism of the populations toward the Soviet Union and its puppet regimes should be exploited more intensively by a coordinated psychological warfare program, adapted to the mentality of each subject people but generally emphasizing nationalist pride and hatred of Soviet exploitation.

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c. The latent and potentially decisive confidence of the satellite peoples toward the West should be kept alive and developed through concrete evidence of Western interest in their fate, Western activity in their behalf, and Western capabilities and determination to defeat the Soviet complex.

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8. (Suggest alterations to existing national strategic policy.)

a. With respect to PW activities in the Balkans, U. S. policy should take the initiative in finding agreement among Yugoslavia, Greece, and Italy regarding a guarantee of Albanian independence and territorial integrity in order to remove the single most important propaganda prop of the Hoxha government and permit a coordinated effort to create a revolutionary situation within the country.

b. Greater pressure should be exerted on the Italian Government to expedite a rapprochement of Italy and Yugoslavia by eliminating such items of serious friction as the Trieste question, thereby improving the psychological climate between Yugoslavia and the West.

c. U. S. long range policy toward the Balkan area and its individual components should be more specifically defined with respect both to U. S. end objectives and the methods that should be used to attain them.

9. (External influences which have a significant impact on the outcome of a strategic approach.)

a. Probably the most significant external influence favoring the development of an integrated U. S. PW program in Southeast Europe is the general unanimity among the anti-Stalinist powers directly interested in Balkan developments regarding the need to contain and if possible force the withdrawal of Soviet power from the area. A concomitant positive factor is their realization that the United States is of necessity the leader in this effort of the anti-Soviet countries.

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This influence has brought both Turkey and Greece into ever closer alliance with the West.

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This influence has also accelerated the reorientation of Yugoslavia toward the West and has tended to overcome obstacles to Yugoslav-Western relations which under other circumstances would have been insurmountable.

b. An unfavorable external element retarding the consolidation of Western strength in the area is the factor of Yugoslav Communism, which gives rise to the question of the degree of active cooperation which can be expected from the Yugoslav Government. Rapprochement between Belgrade and its Western neighbors has been cautious, marked by occasional setbacks, and hedged by various reservations on both sides. In general, however, relations between the two have tended to develop steadily and are characterized by the establishment of working relationships in both the military and economic fields, as well as in other matters of mutual self-interest. Tito's break with Soviet Communism and Yugoslavia's determined effort to survive as a national entity have met with a generally sympathetic reception in the West. The regime's reevaluation of certain aspects of Stalinist doctrine, its effort to cope with the country's complex problems by means of Western aid, and possibly also its growing contact with the West appear to facilitate a greater degree of cooperation in the future.

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